

Austin Water – Center for Environmental Research



Austin Water – The University of Texas – Texas A&M University
A Partnership for Urban Ecology and Sustainability: Community, Ecology, Research
located at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant
2210 South FM 973, Austin, Texas 78725
Website: <http://www.austintexas.gov/cer>



CER Events October 2012

Oct 2

Tuesday – NOON to 1pm AT Dougherty Arts Center, 1110 Barton Springs Road

- **CER Monthly Lunchtime Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson**
- Please note NEW Location for these first Tuesday Lectures – **Dougherty Arts Center**
- **The Natural History of an Urban Vacant Lot: Tannehill Urban Wild Woodland**
- As the nature writer Robert Michael Pyle says, “What, to a curious kid, is less vacant than a vacant lot? Less wasted than waste ground?” However, what kind of nature inhabits vacant lots? The challenge for natural history in vacant lots is to incorporate these weedy trashy places within the narrative of good nature. “Good nature” is native species and is expected to stay put in sanctioned “open” or “green” spaces, like parks, preserves, and gardens, and the boundaries of these sanctioned spaces for nature are frequently transgressed by the cosmopolitan community of flora and fauna which “invades” from vacant land. Thus, urban environmentalists and environmental managers usually push to extend control over vacant lots in order to restore them to culturally and scientifically sanctioned kinds of nature and public uses. By examining the perspectives of science, urban planning and design, and environmentalists, we will see how the inhabitants of vacant lots challenge the boundaries of proper and improper nature and natural history. In particular, I will discuss the ecological and social significance of “urban wild woodlands” on vacant land and their role in urban forestry through the case study of a vacant lot in East Austin.

Oct 6

Saturday 8am meet at CER

- **Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership - Travis County River Monitoring Trip**
- Join Claude Morris and the Travis County Colorado River Monitoring trip for a day on the river monitoring birds and more, and help the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership learn more about the ecology of the Colorado River.
- Meet at the CER parking lot at 8:00AM
- A river trip to monitor birds and vegetation along the river and you MUST provide your own boat or rent one from Cook’s Canoes in Webberville
<http://www.cookscanoes.com/>
- Contact Claude Morris at cgmorris@flash.net to participate
- More about the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership at the CER website Projects and Partnerships page <http://www.austintexas.gov/cer>

Oct 13

Saturday 7am-11am and 4pm to dark meet at CER

- **Hornsby Bend Bird Observatory Monthly Bird Survey**
- The HBBO Bird Survey is open to all levels of birder interested in intensive monitoring, although this is not a field trip. In the morning, we have teams covering different areas of the Hornsby Bend facility, and they count numbers of all birds seen. It is 4 hours of hard hiking and counting, but lots of fun along the way. We meet again around 11am to tally up the species. The afternoon involves looking around for species missed that morning, and we go until sundown. More information about the CER HBBO program at www.hornsbybend.org

Oct 20

Saturday – 730am – 11am at the CER

- **HBBO/Travis Audubon Society - Hornsby Bend Monthly Birding Fieldtrip – FREE!**
Meet at the CER 730am, no registration needed – all levels of birder welcomed, an easy morning of walking and learning the birds of Hornsby Bend. Bring binoculars and some water if the weather is warm. More information at www.travisaudubon.org and www.hornsbybend.org

Oct 23

Tuesday – NOON to 1pm AT CITY HALL Boards and Commissions Room 1101

- **CER Monthly Lunchtime Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson**
- Downtown at City Hall
- **The Natural History of an Urban Vacant Lot: Tannehill Urban Wild Woodland**
- As the nature writer Robert Michael Pyle says, “What, to a curious kid, is less vacant than a vacant lot? Less wasted than waste ground?” However, what kind of nature inhabits vacant lots? The challenge for natural history in vacant lots is to incorporate these weedy trashy places within the narrative of good nature. “Good nature” is native species and is expected to stay put in sanctioned “open” or “green” spaces, like parks, preserves, and gardens, and the boundaries of these sanctioned spaces for nature are frequently transgressed by the cosmopolitan community of flora and fauna which “invades” from vacant land. Thus, urban environmentalists and environmental managers usually push to extend control over vacant lots in order to restore them to culturally and scientifically sanctioned kinds of nature and public uses. By examining the perspectives of science, urban planning and design, and environmentalists, we will see how the inhabitants of vacant lots challenge the boundaries of proper and improper nature and natural history. In particular, I will discuss the ecological and social significance of “urban wild woodlands” on vacant land and their role in urban forestry through the case study of a vacant lot in East Austin.
- **Transportation Options for City Hall**
 - Automobile parking is available in the underground garage. Bring your garage ticket to the talk and we will validate it for free parking.
 - Bicycle parking is available at ground level on both the Guadalupe and Lavaca sides of the block.
 - Buses (select route to see schedule)
 - Chavez & San Antonio: [3 northbound](#).
 - San Antonio & 2nd: [3 southbound](#) .
 - Colorado & 3rd: [10 southbound and 17 eastbound](#).

Oct 24

Wednesday 10am – Noon in Smithville at City Hall - 317 Main Street (512-237-3282)

- **Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership Quarterly Meeting** – Open to anyone interested in the Colorado River – a stakeholder partnership about the future of the river corridor in Travis County and Bastrop County.
- **Presentations**
 - Bastrop Fires: Social and Economic Impacts, Adena Lewis – President, Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Smithville Comprehensive Plan and the Colorado River, Jill Strube – City of Smithville <http://www.ci.smithville.tx.us/Smithville-Comprehensive-Plan.aspx>
 - Expanded Support for Conservation of Texas Rivers through Increased Recreational Access and Sustainable Use, Tim Birdsong - TPWD Chief of Freshwater Habitat Conservation
- More about the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership at the CER website Projects and Partnerships page <http://www.austintexas.gov/cer>

Oct 27

Saturday 9am – 1pm at the CER

- **Ecological Literacy Volunteer Day** – Help maintain Hornsby Bend! Did you know that all the Hornsby Bend trails, habitat gardens, and kiosks were built and are maintained by volunteers? If you enjoy birding or walking along the Colorado River here, please join us in maintaining these amenities and supporting public access at Hornsby Bend.
- We do three hours work and one hour of learning about the ecology of the Colorado River and Hornsby Bend - Wear work-clothes and work-shoes; bring water and binoculars if interested in birds.
- **New! POTLUCK LUNCH AND More ECOLOGICAL LEARNING** - Bring food for our potluck lunch afterwards at 1pm and learn more at a presentation on ecology during lunch.

**For more information about these events, contact Kevin M. Anderson at
Kevin.Anderson@austintexas.gov or 972-1960**